GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:256
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2004
UPLIFTMENT OF BPL
Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Singh Shri Prabhunath

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the BPL Census has been completed in the country;

(b) if so, the number of people living below poverty line in the country as on date giving their comparison during each of the last two plan periods;

(c) if not, the names of the States which are still in the process of identifying the BPL families;

(d) the details of the steps taken by the Government for their upliftment above poverty line;

(e) whether there is a discrepancy relating to the number of BPL families listed by Centre and the States, especially in the case of Orissa;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(g) the time by which a proper and acceptable list be prepared for Orissa?

Answer

MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH)

(a) to (g): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred in Reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No.256 due for Answer on 22.7.2004.

During each Five Year Plan, the Ministry of Rural Development supports a Below Poverty Line (BPL) Census conducted by the State Governments with a view to identifying households living below the poverty line in the rural areas who could be assisted under various anti-poverty Programmes of the Ministry. Accordingly the States/UTs were advised to complete the BPL Census, 2002 by June 2003 in order to identify the BPL households for assistance during the Tenth Plan. However, due to the ruling of the Hon`ble Supreme Court on 5th May, 2003, in People`s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) Writ Petition No.196 of 2001, the State Governments were advised not to finalize the BPL list until the next hearing of the case. On the advice of the Additional Solicitor General the State Governments were again asked to complete the spadework of BPL Census (2002) and preparation of BPL lists immediately, however, they should not be given effect to until appropriate orders are obtained from the Supreme Court in respect of pending application for modification of the order dated 5th May, 2003.

2. The BPL Census 1992 identified 50989917 families (52.49% of total rural families) living Below the Poverty Line whereas the number of such families identified under the BPL Census 1997 was 55570998 (41.05% of total rural families) in the country.

3. In order to improve the living conditions of the rural poor and to uplift them above the poverty line the Government are implementing a number of rural development programmes, which includes wage-employment, self-employment, rural housing, rural roads, area development programmes, rural drinking water supply and sanitation etc. Besides providing employment to the rural poor, rural infrastructure is also created through these programmes.

4. While the Planning Commission makes the estimates of the number and proportion of the rural poor, BPL Census is conducted to identify the rural poor households.